

BNSF Albia Branch
Thursday, August 22: Des Moines, IA

The night before we left, WC 6602 was found at East Ames Yard. Other than that, the trip started out with six members in two cars heading to Des Moines to catch the BNSF eastbound train to Albia. A friendly BNSF employee told us the call time for the train at Glake Yard was 3, so we headed to Short Line Yard to watch some trains until three. There, a new remote control MP15 was switching the yard with ex-CNW 1307.

Soon, MKSIT departed the yard led by flared/flagged UP 4791. It was followed by another four northbounds stacked up behind it. Then, two southbounds got stacked up north of town at Cambridge and Easton, the first one led by a GTW SD40-2.

After waiting on SP 125 north, we heard the BNSF switcher whistle and thought it was our train. We found out it wasn't, and about 45 minutes later, the train appeared. It was led by BNSF 8081, three other green units, and two NS engines; 6554 and high-nose 3269. We followed the train southeast out of Pleasant Hill. My first shots come east of Runnels, where the line dips into the Des Moines river valley. Here, the train rounds the curve.

We beat the train to the Des Moines River bridge near Redrock. The bridge is a concrete structure on a part of the line that connects the ex-CB&Q trackage and the ex-Wabash trackage.

At Pleasantville we stopped to get some video of the train's awesome consist. At this point, the train was pushing 50 mph. Hope they've done some work on the line!!

Clayton wanted to hit Knoxville and some little town past there, so here is the train at an overpass in Knoxville. I took this opportunity to photograph the NS units. Here is the high-nose with the SD60 close behind.

The next stop was Clayton's little gravel crossing. I have to admit that it had some interesting old crossbucks.

We grabbed supper in Albia. There, an old ATSF yellow SD40-2 idled in the yard. After supper, it was getting close to Amtrak time, and there were no signs of ICE action in Moravia. The club started heading west to Osceola. We heard the GT train get a warrant over the radio and rushed to find the spine line, but it was so hidden by weeds that half of us couldn't find the tracks and missed the train.

Amtrak arrived on time at Osceola under the lights of the platform. Here, passengers unload a Superliner car.

After Amtrak, we left Osceola for Ames. As DT would say, That's It!!